

**US\$350 MILLION RICO
LAWSUIT FILED OVER
ASPARTAME**

A US\$350 million class-action lawsuit was filed on 15 September 2004 in United States District Court in San Francisco, California (case no. C 04 3872). This racketeering (RICO) lawsuit was filed against the NutraSweet Corporation, the American Diabetes Association, Dr Robert H. Moser and others. Plaintiffs maintain that this lawsuit will prove how deadly the chemical sweetener aspartame is when consumed by humans.

Contained in the lawsuit is the key role played by current Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, in helping to get aspartame pushed through the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA). Back in the late 1970s to mid-1980s, Rumsfeld was the President and CEO of G. D. Searle & Co., which originally owned the patent on aspartame. Plaintiffs maintain that Rumsfeld used his political muscle to get aspartame approved by the FDA, despite the objections of many FDA health researchers and the negative studies.

According to the press release issued on this RICO lawsuit, "double blind" studies showed conclusive evidence that aspartame caused severe health problems and even death to the exposed study group".

This isn't the first lawsuit filed alleging that aspartame is hazardous to the health of



humans. The National Justice League filed three other lawsuits on 26 April 2004, in three separate California courts. The defendants in those lawsuits number twelve, and all produce or use the artificial sweetener aspartame as a sugar substitute in their products.

This lawsuit charges the defendants with being engaged in unlawful acts of "knowingly and intentionally using the neurotoxic Aspartame as a sugar substitute in the manufacture of Equal™, while knowing that exposure to Aspartame causes among other diseases/symptoms: abdominal pain, arthritis, asthma, brain cancer, breathing difficulties, burning eyes

or throat, burning urination, chest pains, chronic cough, chronic fatigue, death, depression, diarrhea, headaches/migraines, hearing loss, heart palpitations, hives (urticaria), hypertension, impotency and sexual problems, memory loss, menstrual problems or changes, nausea or vomiting, slurring of speech, tremors, tinnitus, vertigo and/or vision loss".

The lawsuit also states, "Further, Aspartame disease mimics symptoms or worsens the following diseases: Fibromyalgia, Arthritis, Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease, Lupus, Diabetes, Epilepsy, Alzheimer's Disease, birth defects, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, Lymphoma, Lyme Disease, Attention Deficit

Disorder (ADD), Panic Disorder, Depression and other psychological disorders".

(Source: *News With Views*, 16 September 2004, www.newswithviews.com/)

**BIOMETRIC ID SYSTEMS
SWEEPING THE WORLD**

In Russia, President Vladimir Putin has signed an order for the establishment of an interdepartmental working group to prepare the introduction of new-generation passport and visa documents.

The group has been instructed to develop, before 1 January 2006, a regulatory and legal framework for the implementation of a state-run system of manufacture, filling out and control of these new-generation documents that will also include biometric information.

It has also been ordered to create the financial/economic terms for the development and introduction of technologies that would meet world standards, as well as for the unification of requirements for individual passport/visa identification documents.

(Source: *Itar-Tass*, 20 September 2004, <http://www.itar-tass.com>)

In Europe, the Draft Council Regulation on standards for security features and biometrics in passports and travel documents issued by European Union (EU) member states—if not overturned by the Council of Justice and Home Ministers—will mean that every one of the 450 million people with passports in the EU will have to queue up in "processing



"After unanimous passage through the Congress and Senate, President Bush solved the problem of getting America out of Iraq by declaring it the 51st state..."

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centres" and compulsorily have their fingerprints taken and have a facial scan. The biometric data gathered will be stored on a chip embedded in the new passports.

Personal details and the biometric data will be held on national databases and on an EU-wide database of European Register for issued passports. The latter will be on the Schengen Information System (SIS II) and will be accessible by law enforcement agencies. Regulations will be binding in their entirety on all 25 member states. (Source: *Statewatch*, 24 October 2004)

In the UK, a Bill on identity cards will introduce the compulsory taking of fingerprints and a facial scan for all new and replacement passports and driving licences issued—meaning that these new micro-chipped cards will also be identity cards. The "processing" is expected to start in 2006, and is expected to deal with over five million people a year needing passports. It is estimated that after six to 10 years, 80% of the population will have an ID card—at which point it will become compulsory for the rest. (Source: *StateWatch.org*, 24 October 2004, <http://tinyurl.com/58at6>)

In the USA, all visitors who are not required to have a visa will now be fingerprinted and photographed. This even applies to 27 nations which have so far escaped the new security controls—including several European nations, Australia, New Zealand and Japan. Immigration officials will take a digital photo of each visitor and inkless prints of both index fingers. The data will be cross-referenced against "no-fly" lists held by anti-terrorist and law enforcement agencies.

From October 2005, all passports issued in the 27 countries on the visa waiver program must contain a barcode and a digital photo. By the end of next year, all US border-crossing officials will be carrying out the new checks. (Source: *BBC News*, 30 September 2004)

CHEMICAL COCKTAIL FOUND IN BLOOD OF EU MINISTERS

The blood of ministers from 13 European Union countries has been found to be contaminated with dozens of industrial chemicals, including some that were banned decades ago.

The officials have an average of 37 industrial chemicals in their blood, according to tests conducted in June and released

in October by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). The chemicals found in the European officials include those used in fire-resistant furniture, non-stick pans, greaseproof pizza boxes, flexible polyvinyl chloride, fragrances and pesticides.

"The ministers are all contaminated with industrial chemicals whose effects are largely unknown," said Karl Wagner, director of WWF's DetoX Campaign. "It is hard to believe that legislators have been willing to allow this uncontrolled experiment to continue for so many years."

The 14 environment and health ministers were found to have a total of 55 industrial chemicals in their blood—53 per cent of the 103 chemicals tested. The highest number of chemicals found in any one minister was 45, and the lowest was thirty-three.

All the officials tested positive for 25 of the same chemicals, including one flame retardant, two pesticides and 22 polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).

WWF tested ministers from Great Britain, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Slovakia, Spain and Sweden.

The conservation group carried out the tests in a bid to rally support for tougher European laws on chemical testing and identification, in particular for the draft European Union proposal known as REACH (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals), a law that could lead to the identification and phasing out of the most harmful chemicals.

Some 86 per cent of the 2,500 chemicals used in large quantities do not have enough safety information publicly available to do a basic safety assessment, according to WWF.

The study of the European Union ministers can be found at <http://www.worldwildlife.org/toxics/pubs/badblood.pdf>. (Source: *Environment News Service*, 20 October 2004)

THINGS GROW BETTER WITH COCA-COLA!

Indian farmers have come up with what they think is the "real thing" to keep crops free of bugs. Instead of paying hefty fees to international chemical companies for patented pesticides, they are reportedly spraying their crops with Coca-Cola.

Gotu Laxmaiah, a farmer in Andhra Pradesh, is one of hundreds of farmers delighted with his new cola spray, which he applied this year to several hectares of cotton. "I observed that the pests began to die after the soft drink was sprayed on my cotton," he told the *Deccan Herald* newspaper.

It is clearly not Coke's legendary "secret" ingredient that is upsetting the bugs. The farmers also swear by Pepsi, Thums Up, and other local soft drinks.

The properties of Coke have been discussed for years. It has been reported that it is a fine lavatory cleaner, a good wind-screen wipe and an efficient rust-spot remover.

(Source: *The Guardian*, 2 November 2004, <http://www.guardian.co.uk>)



US AIR FORCE RESEARCHING ANTIMATTER WEAPONS

The US Air Force is quietly spending millions of dollars investigating ways to use antimatter in future weapons.

Antimatter has been intensively studied by physicists since the 1930s. In a sense, matter and antimatter are the *yin* and *yang* of reality: every type of subatomic particle has its antimatter counterpart. But when matter and antimatter collide, they annihilate each other in an immense burst of energy.

During the Cold War, the Air Force funded numerous scientific studies of the basic physics of antimatter with a view to potential military uses, e.g., antimatter bombs small enough to hold in one's hand, and antimatter engines for 24/7 surveillance aircraft. More cataclysmic possible uses include a new generation of super-weapons—either pure antimatter bombs or antimatter-triggered nuclear weapons; the former wouldn't emit radioactive fallout. Another possibility is antimatter-powered electromagnetic pulse weapons that could fry an enemy's electric power grid and communications networks, leaving him literally in the dark and unable to operate.

On 24 March, Kenneth Edwards, director of the "revolutionary munitions" team at the Munitions Directorate at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, was keynote speaker at the NASA Institute for Advanced Concepts (NIAC) conference in Arlington, Virginia. He explained in his speech that the energy from colliding positrons and anti-electrons is "10 billion times...that of high explosive".

Following an initial inquiry from the *San*

Francisco Chronicle, the Air Force forbade its employees from publicly discussing the antimatter research program. Still, details on the program appeared in numerous Air Force documents distributed over the Internet prior to the ban.

(Source: *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4 October 2004, <http://tinyurl.com/6lv7r>)

FDA APPROVES VERICHIP FOR HUMAN IMPLANTATION

Applied Digital and Digital Angel Corporation have announced that VeriChip™, the world's first implantable radiofrequency identification (RFID) microchip for human use, has been cleared by the US Food and Drug Administration for medical uses in the USA.

The VeriChip Health Information Microtransponder System consists of an implantable RFID microtransponder, an inserter, a proprietary hand-held scanner and a secure database containing the patient-approved healthcare information. About the size of a grain of rice, VeriChip is a subdermal radiofrequency microchip that is inserted under the skin in a brief outpatient procedure.

While the VeriChip cannot be seen by the human eye, each chip contains a unique 16-digit verification number that is captured by briefly passing a scanner over the insertion site. The captured 16-digit number links to the database via encrypted Internet access. The previously stored information is then conveyed via the Internet to the registered requesting healthcare provider.

(Source: *VeriChip press release*, 13 October 2004, <http://tinyurl.com/3jp5u>)

QUADRIPLEGIC CONTROLS COMPUTER VIA BRAIN CHIP

A pill-sized brain chip has allowed a quadriplegic man to check email and play computer games using his thoughts. The device can tap into a hundred neurons at a time, and is the most sophisticated such implant so far tested in humans.

Many paralysed people control computers with their eyes or tongue. But these techniques are limited by muscle function and require a lot of training. For over a decade, researchers have been trying to find a way to tap directly into thoughts.

In June 2004, surgeons implanted a device containing 100 electrodes into the motor cortex of a 24-year-old quadriplegic. The device, called the BrainGate, was developed by the company Cyberkinetics, based in Foxborough, Massachusetts.

Each electrode taps into a neuron in the patient's brain. The BrainGate allowed the patient to control a computer or television using his mind, even when doing other things at the same time. The researchers reported that, for example, he could control his television while talking and moving his head. The team now plans to implant devices into four more patients.

Rival teams are building devices to read brain activity without touching neurons. Neural Signals, based in Atlanta, has patented a conductive skull screw that sits outside the brain, just under the skull. Other researchers are developing non-invasive technologies, e.g., using an electroencephalogram to read a patient's thoughts.

(Source: *Nature*, 13 October 2004, <http://www.nature.com/news/index.html>)

DID BUSH'S BUDDIES HACK THE US ELECTION?

The underground media in America are united in their belief that the US election was "stolen", with not just one tactic but several used in the process.

• **Electronic Voting Machines:** The key to it all was the use of electronic voting machines that produce no paper trail. These were manufactured mainly by two companies, ESS and Diebold. Both of these companies are big supporters of the Republican Party and have good connections with the same military/industrial/intelligence complex backing Bush.

A bill introduced in the House and Senate to outlaw these machines and require a paper printout of each vote, so that the votes could be verified and/or



recounted, was stalled by the Republican Party and not allowed to go to the vote.

Shortly after the 2 November election, countless stories of problems with the machines began to surface.

Many people who tried to vote for Kerry said that when the final screen confirmation came up, it said they'd voted for Bush. In one precinct in Ohio, 4,258 votes were given to Bush, where there were only 638 registered voters!

Many more stories about the black-box voting machines, their problems and the investigation into their tampering are circulating. Blackboxvoting.org is leading the way in the investigation to prove that the results were tampered with.

• **Exit Polls:** Exit polls were taken in every state. In those states that had verifiable paper trails for their ballots, the exit polls were virtually the same as the real results. However, in the states where electronic voting machines were used, the exit polls were mysteriously very different from the final reported totals.

• **Unusual Results:** In the areas where computers were used to cast votes or tally them, some very strange results have surfaced. Here is just one example. In Baker County, Florida, there are 12,887 registered voters, 69.3% of whom are registered Democrats and 24.3% Republicans. The vote count was only 2,180 for Kerry and 7,738 for Bush. Are we supposed to believe that five out of every seven registered Democrats voted for Bush? This kind of pattern was seen in many Florida and Ohio counties.

• **Intimidation:** In addition to the electronic voting machine fraud, there was widespread voter intimidation and disenfranchisement on election day. In many Democratic areas, people waited hours to vote, while Republicans "challenged" voters' rights to vote, forcing them to fill out a provisional ballot instead of a real ballot. The provisional ballots were not counted on election day, and we may never know how many of them there were or what rules will be used to qualify them.

Three Congressmen have sent a letter to the Government Accountability Office, requesting urgent action and an investigation. Ralph Nader is leading a consumer investigation into voter fraud countrywide, and has already filed an official challenge to the voting results in New Hampshire.

(Source: from Gary Beckwith, *The Solar Bus*, 8 November 2004, <http://www.solarbus.org/stealyourelection>)

PENTAGON WOULD ATTACK EU SATELLITES IN WARTIME

Senior Pentagon officials have warned Brussels that they will not hesitate to blow European Union satellites out of the sky if they are used against America by a hostile power such as China.

In an astonishing confrontation at a private conference between the United States and the European Union (EU), European delegates insisted they would not be prepared to turn off or jam signals from their proposed *Galileo* navigation satellites, even if they were being used in a war against the US. In response, the US delegates replied that they understood this and intended—if faced with such a threat—to take whatever action they felt appropriate.

Galileo is a joint European Union–European Space Agency initiative for a global navigation system. A constellation of 30 satellites orbiting the Earth at an altitude of 23,300 kilometres, it is scheduled to be fully operational worldwide before the end of this decade. Earlier this month, the EU announced that China had become a partner in its €3.5 bn (US\$4.4 bn, £2.4 bn) *Galileo* satellite system.

The state of Pentagon thinking on *Galileo* is confirmed in a US Air Force doctrine document issued on 2 August 2004. In a foreword, Peter Teets, Under-Secretary of the US Air Force, asks: "What will we do 10 years from now when American lives are put at risk because an adversary chooses to leverage the global positioning system of perhaps the *Galileo* constellation to attack American forces with precision?"

The conference, on the "Future of Transatlantic Military Space Relations", was held at London's Royal United Services Institute, this month [October]. A senior European delegate said: "The Americans were very calm. They made it clear that they would attempt what they called reversible action, but, if necessary, they would use irreversible action." The US would first try unilaterally to jam *Galileo*'s signals, but if this failed it would use attack-satellites to destroy one or all of its units in an unprecedented *Star Wars*-style raid.

The London meeting also confirmed that the EU and US are well aware of *Galileo*'s military potential, a fact until now denied by the UK government. It reflects mounting US anger at the EU's decision, formalised this month, to include China in its space program. Some Pentagon figures are believed to suspect that the EU may even have given China secret assurances that it would never shut down the system, giving China a massive boost if it were ever to attack Taiwan—a key US ally.

Speakers at the meeting included Robert Dickman, Deputy for Military Space, US Department of Defense; Luc Tytgat, head of the Space Unit, European Commission; Major General Robert Kehler, Director of the National Security Space Office, US Department of Defense; Gerhard Brauer, head of the Security Office, European Space Agency; and Major-General Michael Hamel, Commander 14th Air Force, USAF Space Command. Top UK delegates were also present.

The USAF is working on a new generation of so-called "killer satellites" as part of a secretive project called the Experimental Satellite Series (XSS). It follows recommendations contained in the Air Force's 1999 Microsatellite Technology and Requirements Study of a need for the deployment of satellites "to intercept, image and, if needed, take action against a target satellite". A test satellite, coded XSS-10, was successfully launched in 2003, and the contract to build its successor, XSS-11, with a more specific sensor payload, has already been awarded.

Top Brussels officials are recommending that EU member states should pool all space navigation resources, fuse their civilian and military programs and allow collective access to them. This plan was discussed on 8 September by the European Council's political and military strategy group, and it will be debated at ministerial level by the end of the year. The European Commission recently said: "Space systems can also provide direct contributions to the Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy and its European Security and Defence Policy."

(Source: by Allistar Heath and Tracy Boles, *The Business [Europe's global business news]*, 24 October 2004, <http://tinyurl.com/6j44p>, <http://www.thebusinessonline.com>)